

I also find that the ability of any outsider to affect in a positive way the course of an election is far more limited than is generally supposed. The voters understand that every election year they get to be in control again. And so, if you notice, like when I went to campaign for Mr. Street in Philadelphia, a place that has been enormously good to me, I was very careful in what I said to the voters. I said, "You shouldn't be for him because I am, but you know, I'm your friend. Here are my reasons. I hope you'll listen to my reasons and make up your own mind." It's a very delicate thing. I've watched this for years.

I remember once, Jim Brady's old boss, President Reagan, in '84, when he was winning every vote in America, came to Arkansas and made an appearance for my opponent. And afterward,

on Election Day, he got 62 percent of the vote, so did I. [*Laughter*] So you have to be—you've got to be humble in these things and just sort of show up for work every day.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mr. Brady's wife, Sarah Brady, chair, Handgun Control, Inc.; former White House Press Secretaries Michael McCurry, Larry M. Speakes, J.F. terHorst, and Pierre E.G. Salinger; and Mayor John F. Street of Philadelphia, PA. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Press Secretary Joe Lockhart, who introduced the President, and of Mr. and Mrs. Brady. Mr. Brady was wounded in the 1981 assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan.

## Statement on Peacekeeping Efforts in East Timor

*February 11, 2000*

Over the last several months, the United States has worked with our partners in Southeast Asia to help East Timor in its transition to independence and peace. I am proud we were able to support the efforts of the Australian-led INTERFET force, which has brought security and hope to East Timor. With its mission accomplished, INTERFET is now handing responsibility to a U.N. peacekeeping mission, through which the countries of the region will once again provide the vast majority of troops.

Today I am announcing that the United States will continue to support our friends and allies in this important endeavor. A small number of U.S. officers will serve as observers in the U.N. mission. As part of their normal exercises, other U.S. personnel will contribute to humanitarian efforts, such as rebuilding schools and restoring

medical services. These efforts will complement our financial contributions to the peacekeeping operation, as well as humanitarian and development assistance to East Timor that will total over \$70 million this year. We will also continue to stand by Indonesia as it continues its hopeful democratic transformation.

In this way, we will contribute to the birth of two new democracies in a region where freedom and tolerance are taking root. And we will bolster the ability and willingness of the countries in that region to take the lead in building peace.

NOTE: The related memorandum of February 10 on U.S. military activities in East Timor is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

*February 11, 2000*

The Good Friday accord, made possible by the courage of leaders from both of Northern Ireland's communities, responded to the peo-

ple's overwhelming desire for peace. It has been sustained by those leaders making the tough decisions necessary to keep the process moving

forward. I regret that the IRA did not give the de Chastelain Commission a more timely commitment on arms decommissioning to maintain the momentum toward full implementation of the accord—a commitment which reflects the wishes of the vast majority of people both in Ireland and in Northern Ireland.

At the same time, we have seen real progress in the past few days. This progress is reflected in the most recent report from the de Chastelain

Commission, which states that the commitment made by the IRA's representative "holds out the real prospect of an agreement which would enable [the Commission] to fulfill the substance of its mandate." I urge all the parties to build on that progress, remain engaged, and carry through on their responsibilities to work together to achieve the full implementation of the Good Friday accord.

## The President's Radio Address

*February 12, 2000*

Good morning. Today I want to speak with you about the important steps we're taking to reach one of our Nation's highest goals, helping all our people to succeed at work and in the most important work of all, caring for their children.

For 7 years now, this administration has taken action to give families more of the tools they need to balance the difficult demands of work and home. We've helped to make child care better, safer, and more affordable for millions of families. We've greatly expanded preschool and after-school programs. We've fought to give generous tax credits to help the growing numbers of families who provide care for aging or ailing loved ones at home.

This month we're celebrating the seventh anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act, the very first bill I was privileged to sign as President. That bill was the product of years of hard work by a large coalition of caring leaders, many of whom have joined me here today. They should be very proud of their efforts.

The family and medical leave law has now given more than 20 million Americans the opportunity to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a newborn child or a sick relative or attend to their own serious health needs without fear of losing their jobs. Everywhere I go, people come up to me and tell me how much this law has meant to their lives. I've heard people say that the time they were able to take off to be by their dad's side in the hospital or bond with a new daughter at home was the most important time they've ever spent.

Not only has the law been a godsend for families, it's also been good for business. Nearly 85 percent of businesses reported that complying with the law required no extra cost. In fact, in many cases it has actually helped save them money by cutting down on turnover and reducing the expense of training new workers.

But for all the success of this law, we know we can and should do more. Today, there are still large numbers of families who need to take leave from work but can't afford to give up the income. That's why, 3 months ago, Labor Secretary Alexis Herman and I proposed a new rule to give States flexibility to use their existing unemployment insurance programs to offer paid leave to new parents. Participation is purely voluntary, but we hope States will take advantage of this. Before they do, they must determine how it will affect the soundness of their unemployment system.

Today I am pleased to announce a new way we can make it easier for States to take up this challenge. I'm proposing \$20 million in new competitive grants to help develop and evaluate creative new approaches for providing paid family leave to workers, whether it's through unemployment insurance, temporary disability programs, or any other source. Many States have already recognized the great need for paid leave and have begun drafting their own proposals to provide it. We hope and believe our grants will help to speed the way.

There are two more steps I believe we should take right away. Once again, I asked Congress to expand family and medical leave to give parents time off when they have to go to see their